



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

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CONTACT: Mitchel Benson
(916) 653-4052
cell (916) 769-5087

**'AMERICAN IDOL'S' RANDY JACKSON, 'KILL BILL' PRODUCER
LAWRENCE BENDER, AUTHOR ARIANNA HUFFINGTON, JOIN STATE
TREASURER ANGELIDES & UC-SANTA BARBARA STUDENTS AND
FACULTY TO SUPPORT CRITICAL HIGHER EDUCATION INVESTMENT
AND OPPOSE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED CUTS AND FEE HIKES**

*Governor's Budget Proposal Would Hike Tuition and Fees For California College
Students, Slash Enrollment, Force Larger Class Sizes and Reduce Financial Aid*

SANTA BARBARA, CA – "American Idol's" Randy Jackson, film producer Lawrence Bender and noted author, columnist and commentator Arianna Huffington joined California State Treasurer Phil Angelides here today to lead a town hall forum with students and faculty from the University of California, Santa Barbara to oppose the harmful impacts that Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed budget, enrollment cuts and fee hikes would have on students, academic quality and California's long-term economic prosperity.

The celebrities and Treasurer gathered at UC-Santa Barbara's Multicultural Center Theater with college students and faculty from the Santa Barbara area on the second stop of a daylong, statewide tour to highlight the damaging effects of the Governor's proposed budget cuts on the University of California, California State University and California Community College systems and students. The group, which started out earlier in the day at the University of California, San Diego, was then expected to conclude at California State University, Hayward.

The college campus tour was scheduled for the same week that a joint state Senate-Assembly conference committee of lawmakers in Sacramento was expected to begin work on the Schwarzenegger Administration's proposed budget for the 2004-05 budget year that begins on July 1. Angelides has spoken out forcefully against the Governor's proposed higher education budget since it was first released in January, and, last week, Democratic lawmakers in Sacramento vowed to make the Governor's higher education cuts a key fight in the upcoming budget debate with the Schwarzenegger Administration. Those cuts were contained in a so-called "compact" that the Governor recently signed with the UC President and the CSU Chancellor, an agreement that is not binding on the Legislature and has been strongly attacked by students and faculty, who were locked out of the negotiations.

The Governor's recently revised budget includes \$680 million in cuts to the UC and CSU systems. The Schwarzenegger Administration's spending plan would, among other things: increase undergraduate student fees over the next three years by more than 30 percent, and graduate fees by more than 50 percent; turn away 25,000 qualified students from enrolling at UC and CSU; cut financial aid for students; reduce UC research funding by more than \$11 million; and increase student-faculty ratios at state schools, a move that would result in larger class sizes and fewer course offerings.

The Schwarzenegger Administration also wants to eliminate state support for UC and CSU outreach programs that help prepare low-income and educationally disadvantaged students for college – after cutting the programs by 50 percent this year.

“These cuts and fee increases not only hurt students and the quality of our colleges, but also damage the long-term economic prosperity of California,” Angelides said. “Our college graduates are the backbone of our State's workforce and our ticket to global economic competitiveness. Our college and university campuses pump billions of dollars into California's economy each year. We need to be finding new and inventive ways to prime this economic engine, not proposing short-sighted schemes to cut off its fuel supply.”

Angelides said the Governor's budget “is unfair because it asks students to sacrifice and it imposes damaging higher education cuts that threaten our future prosperity without even attempting to close one corporate tax loophole or restore the tax rates on the wealthiest Californians that were put in place by Governors Ronald Reagan and Pete Wilson.”

Huffington asked, “How did we get to the point as a society where tax breaks for corporations and the wealthiest Californians are more important than helping our children get a college education? How many dreams have been eliminated as a result of these perverted priorities? I find it tragic – and deeply ironic – that we are willing to invest tens of thousands of dollars a year on a child who goes wrong and winds up in the criminal justice system, but we begrudge the far smaller amount it would take to maintain California's commitment to the education of its young people.”

Lance Tackett, a junior at UC-Santa Barbara majoring in Law and Society and Sociology, said, “We are not going to stand idle while the Governor takes money from our universities. The people of Sacramento need to realize that we stand as a unified student movement, and we will not give up until our needs have been met.”

Treasurer Angelides has been a leading voice in the fight to protect California's first-class public university system. He was the first statewide elected official to come out against the Schwarzenegger Administration's budget for higher education – during a statewide tour of college and high school campuses in January – voicing his concerns in a debate that has serious ramifications for college students and the State's economy. Most recently, the Treasurer on April 14 led a delegation of visiting high school students from across the State to the Capitol to participate in a rally, meet with lawmakers and testify before a legislative committee to oppose the Governor's plan to eliminate college outreach programs.